



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

GH  
50  
15

WITTOL SERIES No. 1

JESTS OF HIEROCLES

ROWFANT CLUB

50.15

HARVARD  
COLLEGE LIBRARY



THE GIFT OF  
*Dr. John Rathbone Oliver*  
CLASS OF 1894  
OF BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

---

AUGUST 4, 1941





# **THE WITTOL SERIES**

## **I**

*One hundred twenty-  
five copies were printed  
This copy is number*

**40**

**THE JESTS OF  
HIEROCLES AND  
PHILAGRIUS**

**NEWLY TRANSLATED FROM THE  
GREEK**

**BY  
CHARLES CLINCH BUBB**



**CLEVELAND  
THE ROWFANT CLUB  
MCMXX**



~~2025 1941~~

✓

~~Gh 49.18.5~~

Gh 50.15

✓

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LIBRARY  
UNIVERSITY OF  
DARTMOUTH COLLEGE  
AUGUST 4, 1941

**COPYRIGHT, 1920, BY  
THE ROWFANT CLUB**



## CONTENTS

FOREWORD . . . . .	5
JESTS OF HIEROCLES AND PHILAGRIUS . .	15
<i>The Pedants</i> . . . . .	17
<i>From the Philogelos</i> . . . . .	47
<i>The Men of Abdera</i> . . . . .	50
<i>The Men of Sidonia</i> . . . . .	56
<i>The Witty Fellows</i> . . . . .	60
<i>The Men of Cumæ</i> . . . . .	64
<i>The Discontented People</i> . . . . .	73
<i>The Awkward Ones</i> . . . . .	77
<i>The Timid Ones</i> . . . . .	77
<i>The Misers</i> . . . . .	84
<i>The Starvelings</i> . . . . .	85
<i>About Drunkards</i> . . . . .	88
<i>About Those with Bad Breath</i> . . . .	90
<i>Woman Haters</i> . . . . .	96
<i>Miscellaneous</i> . . . . .	98
APPENDIX . . . . .	103



## Foreword

**W**HEN Homer sings of the unquenchable laughter in which the gods indulged at their banquet upon Mount Olympus, one is naturally curious to learn the cause of their merriment. It comes with a sense of disappointment to find that it was the uncouth antics of the lamed and deformed Hephaestus that pleased the deities at their meal. It is said that Homer's gods and goddesses reflect the ideas and customs of his time, and if so, this is, then, an early instance of the employment of what was destined later to be the court fool.

It would be interesting to trace the development of the idea which finds the sight of physical deformity humorous; it evidently belongs to the childhood of the race, judging from those who see in children the

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

expression of the various stages through which mankind has passed in its growth in civilization. The child, before it begins to reflect, can see something amusing in a hunch-back or cross-eyed person, whereas in later years pity and compassion take the place of the unconscious cruelty caused by laughter at physical defects. A nation's state of civilization and morals may be inferred to a certain extent by what it considers humorous. It is no wonder, therefore, that a people who revelled in the bloody exhibitions of the amphitheatre could find the sight of physical mutilation or painful suffering sufficiently amusing to preserve such anecdotes in their collections of *facetiae*. To the modern mind there is nothing to laugh at in the section of this work dealing with the unfortunate people of Abdera or the eunuchs, or the ruptured.

Next to the deformed person as a means of exciting laughter, may be placed the wittol, the natural fool who blunders

#### AND PHILAGRIUS

through life because of his taking everything literally, who never seems to gain any knowledge by experience and who apparently never uses his reason. The stories about wittols are to be found in nearly every language and form what might be called folk-humour. These stories tend to group themselves about some one class or individual in the community, or are attributed to the inhabitants of certain localities. The class that is most held up to ridicule is the book-learned who through much devotion to study of the abstract become impractical in matters connected with daily life. The *Panshatantra* says, "They who seek wisdom only from books, without a knowledge of the ways of the world, are but learned fools, and reap the world's contempt."

The Greek jests about the wittols or pedants have long passed under the name of Hierocles, an Alexandrian philosopher of the Pythagorean school, who flourished in the fifth century, A.D. That these

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

jests are old there can be no doubt whatever; that they were originated or collected by Hierocles is more than doubtful. Some we know are much older, and in the works where found are attributed to still more ancient times. It has been suggested that there is a possibility of their origin going back to the early Egyptians. That the Egyptians had an idea of the humorous is shown by some of the grotesque delineations at Thebes which have been pointed out by Wilkinson in his work on *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, and quoted by Wright in his *History of Caricature*. We may still hope that some time a papyrus roll belonging to an Egyptian Joe Miller may be unearthed which will tell us something about the beginnings of humour. These jests were attributed to Hierocles because several were appended to the manuscript of his *Commentary on the Golden Words of Pythagoras*. Twenty-eight only are thus found together with those in the fragments of his other works,

#### AND PHILAGRIUS

edited with Latin translations in 1709 by John Needham. A larger collection was published in 1869 by Alfred Eberhard of Berlin under the title *Philogelos, Hieroclis et Philagrii Facetiæ* and included stories of the people of Abdera, Sidonia, Cumæ, etc. For his edition, Eberhard drew upon the labours of Boissonade and Pontanus and also upon three manuscripts of the fifteenth century. The reader will observe from the repetition of several of the stories that Eberhard combined his sources into this one book. Although the elements contained in this collection are of evident antiquity, the texts of the stories date from the ninth century. The edition of Eberhard has been used for this translation. The stories are not all concerned with wittols, but it was thought better to present the whole book rather than to make a selection. Had the translator consulted his own tastes many of the facetiæ would have been left in the decent obscurity of the original Greek.



### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

These stories seem to have come into the popular *facetiae* of Europe through the churchmen of the Middle Ages and, having long circulated orally, passed into literature. In them are found the indirect originals of the blunders and bulls that are ascribed to the Irishman or the Scotchman who has nowadays taken the place of the pedant.

In reading them in the original or in this translation, many seem to have a very modern flavour, and causes one to wonder what it is that gives them their perennial freshness, especially when transferred to other peoples and decked out with modern dressing and local colouring. It is the old inherent tendency to laugh at other people's mistakes and awkwardness, looking at them from an assumed position of superiority. Some one before Sidney Smith said that humour resulted from the juxtaposition of incongruous ideas, and although there are many incongruous ideas in these pre-Hibernian bulls yet this definition does not sufficiently explain their ability to still amuse.

#### AND PHILAGRIUS

In 1803 Sidney Smith, in a review of Edgeworth's *Essay on Irish Bulls*, says,

A bull is an apparent incongruity, and a real incongruity of ideas, suddenly discovered. And if this account of bulls be just, they are (as might have been supposed) the very reverse of wit; for as wit discovers real relations, that are not apparent, bulls admit apparent relations that are not real. The pleasure arising from wit proceeds from our surprise at suddenly discovering two things to be similar, in which we suspected no similarity. The pleasure arising from bulls proceeds from our discovering two things to be dissimilar, in which a resemblance might have been suspected. . . . It is clear that a bull cannot depend upon mere incongruity alone; for if a man were to say that he would ride to London upon a cocked hat, or that he would cut his throat with a pound of pickled salmon, this, though completely incongruous, would not be to make bulls, but to talk nonsense. The stronger the apparent connection, and the more complete the real disconnection of the ideas, the greater the surprise and the better the bull. The less apparent, and the more complete the relations established by wit, the higher gratification does it afford.

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

How far these Greek facetiæ agree with this definition is left to the reader to judge.

So far as can be learned this is the first complete translation into English of the *Philogelos*. A few jests were translated in 1741 and published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for that year. These have been attributed by Lowndes to Dr. Samuel Johnson, and are to be found in an appendix to this work. They form an interesting Johnson item which many bibliographers have overlooked. Doctor Johnson was a contributor to the magazine at that time and if they were not translated by him, they well might have been, judging from their ponderous and involved style which takes the real point out of the joke. W. A. Clouston published twenty-nine of these stories in *The Book of Noodles* in 1888 but they were freely rendered and in several there are mistakes that would lead one to believe that he borrowed them from some other translation. A long time since, two or three were printed in a handbook of an-

#### AND PHILAGRIUS

cient literature as specimens of classic wit. These were evidently derived from Harkness's *Elementary Greek Reader* published about forty years ago. This exhausts the list of translations so far as the writer has been able to trace.

The text of many of these facetiæ is very corrupt, as will be seen from several of Eberhard's comments in the notes, and replete with post-classical and transliterated Latin words; at times the lexicon failed completely and the meanings had to be derived from the Latin notes and emendations suggested by previous editors of the text.

Acknowledgment is here made to Professor Harold N. Fowler, PH.D., of the College for Women, Western Reserve University, and Professor Barker Newhall, PH.D., of Kenyon College, who kindly allowed the first drafts of the translation to be read to them and who made valuable suggestions in the rendering of obscure passages.

#### FOREWORD

This volume is the first of a series of books dealing with the wittols of various countries, a collection which has never before been brought together and which it is hoped will prove acceptable to the members of the Rowfant Club.

C. C. B.

Cleveland, August 1, 1919.

**The Jests of  
Hierocles and Philagrius**



# The Jests of Hierocles and Philagrius

## The Pedants

### I

A pedant ordered a silversmith to make a lamp and when the latter enquired how large he should make it, he replied, "Large enough for eight men."

### 2

A pedant whilst swimming almost choked to death. He made an oath that he would not go into the water again until he had first learned to swim well.

### 3

A certain person coming to a pedant who was a physician said, "Doctor, when I awake from sleep I have a dizziness for half an hour and then I recover." The physician replied, "Get up after the half hour."



## JESTS OF HIEROCLES

4

A certain person asked a pedant, who had a horse for sale, if it had thrown once (i.e. shed its first teeth, or was mature). When the latter answered that it had thrown twice, he asked, "How is that?" The pedant replied, "Once when he threw me and once when he threw my father."

5

A certain person meeting a pedant said, "Master Pedant, I dreamed I met you." "By the gods," he replied, "I was so busy I did not notice it."

6

A pedant seeing his family physician approaching, hid from him. Upon being asked by one of his companions why he did this, he replied, "I have not been ill for such a long time that I am ashamed to meet him."

7

A physician gave orders to a pedant who had an operation on his throat that he

#### AND PHILAGRIUS

should not talk. He directed his servant to welcome visitors instead of himself. Then he said to each one, "You will not take this as an insult if my servant greets you instead of myself, for the doctor has forbidden me to talk."

#### 8

A pedant desiring to capture a mouse that was gnawing his books used to sit in the dark holding a piece of meat in his mouth.

#### 9

A pedant desiring to teach his ass to go without eating did not give him any provender. When the ass died from hunger he exclaimed, "I have suffered a great loss, for when he had learned not to eat he died."

#### 10

A pedant who had a horse for sale was asked if it were not timid. He replied, "No, by my father's salvation, for he has only stood in the stable."

#### 19

## JESTS OF HIEROCLES

### 11

A pedant desiring to see how he looked when asleep stood with closed eyes before his mirror.

### 12

A friend said to a pedant who was going on a journey, "I wish you to purchase for me two slave boys of fifteen years each." He replied, "If I do not find such, I shall buy for you one of thirty years."

### 13

Two pedants were complaining to each other because their fathers were living. One of them asked, "What do you wish? Shall each one strangle his own father?" "By no means," replied the other, "lest we be called parricides. But if you are willing, you shall slay my father, and I will kill yours."

### 14

A pedant having bought a house and looking out of the window asked the passers-by if the house were becoming to him.

### 15

A pedant dreamed that he had stepped

#### AND PHILAGRIUS

on a nail and bound up his foot. A friend asking the reason and upon learning it, said, "We are justly called fools because we sleep with bare feet."

16

A pedant was looking for his book for many days but could not find it. By chance as he was eating lettuces and turned a certain corner he saw the book lying there. Later meeting a friend who was lamenting the loss of his girdle, he said, "Do not worry but buy some lettuces and eat them at the corner, when you turn it and go a little ways you will find it."

17

A friend who was going abroad wrote to a pedant that he should buy certain books for him. But he neglected the commission and meeting the friend on his return, he said, "The letter which you sent concerning the books has not been received."

18

A certain person meeting a pedant said, "The slave you sold me died." "By the

21

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

gods," replied the other, "he never did such a thing when he was with me."

19

A pedant seeing a flock of sparrows perching in a tree, spread out his cloak and shook the tree as though the sparrows would fall.

20

Two pedants after supper out of politeness escorted one another home in turn and so did not get any sleep.<sup>1</sup>

21

A pedant desiring to sleep and not having a pillow ordered his servant to place a jar under his head. When the servant said that it was hard, he commanded him to stuff it with feathers.

22

A pedant meeting a certain friend said, "I heard that you were dead." He replied, "But you see me alive." The pedant answered, "I assure you that he who told me was much more worthy of belief than you."

<sup>1</sup> *Se invicem domum comitantes.*—PONTANUS.

AND PHILAGRIUS

23

A pedant, entering the bath when it was first opened and finding no one within, said to his servant, "As far as I can see the bath does not wash!"<sup>2</sup>

24

A pedant was quarrelling with his father and said to him, "You wicked fellow, do you not understand how much injury you have done to me? If you had never been born I should have inherited my grandfather's estate."

25

A pedant was on a voyage when a severe storm arose and his slaves were crying out. "Do not weep," he said, "for I have given you all your liberty in my will."

26

A pedant was seeking a spot where he

<sup>2</sup> I can not grasp the point of the joke; is it possible that there is here a reference to the story related by *Diogenes Laertius*, vi, 2, 47? "Diogenes seeing a dirtily kept bath, asked, 'Where do people wash themselves, who wash here?'"

23

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

might build a tomb for himself. When some one said that a certain situation was good, he replied, "But the place is unhealthy."

27

A sick pedant bargained with a physician to give him a fee if he should cure him. When his wife found fault with him for drinking wine in a fever, he said, "Do you wish me to be cured so that I shall be obliged to give the physician a reward?"

28

A pedant's dog bit his thumb. He said, "If he had laid hold of my cloak he would have torn it."

29

One of twin brothers died and a pedant meeting the survivor asked him, "Did you die, or was it your brother?"

30

A pedant about to go on a voyage asked for his tablets in order that he might write his will. Seeing his slaves lamenting be-

24

AND PHILAGRIUS

cause of the danger, he said, "Do not grieve, for I have freed you."

31

A pedant desiring to cross a river went on board the ferry-boat on his horse. Being asked why he did not dismount, he replied, "I am in a hurry to get over."

32

A pedant who had been invited to a banquet did not eat and being asked by one of the guests, "Why do you not eat?" he replied, "Lest I seem to be here for the sake of eating."

33

A pedant's little boy was playing ball when the ball fell into a well. Leaning over and seeing his reflection, he asked for the ball. Next he complained to his father that it was not returned. And he, leaning over the well and seeing his reflection, demanded the ball. "You who live down there," he said, "give the ball to the boy."

34

A pedant visiting a sick friend asked

25



### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

about the disease. When the latter did not reply, he became angry. "I hope to be ill," he said, "and I shall not reply to you."

#### 35

A pedant having purchased a stolen amphora covered it with pitch in order that it might not be recognized.

#### 36

A pedant used to ask the price of the clothing of the people he met. When his father heard of this from some friends and blamed him, he replied, "Father, you have been persuaded by slander and not by a man." When he said, "Such a one told me." "And did you," he answered, "give heed to that one who does not possess a cloak worth fifty drachmas?"

#### 37

A pedant was selling a horse and when some one came and observed closely the condition of its teeth, he said, "Why do you examine his teeth? I wish that he might trot as well as he eats."

AND PHILAGRIUS

38

A pedant whose old father was very ill asked his friends to wear chaplets at the funeral. On the following day he was better and the friends being annoyed, he said, "I am ashamed that you are disappointed. To-morrow wear the chaplets for I shall bury him as he is." <sup>3</sup> .

39

Two pedants were walking together and one of them perceiving a black hen, said, "Brother, perhaps her cock is dead."

40

A pedant who had lost a small son by death seeing many people coming to the funeral on account of his position, said, "I am ashamed to bring forth such a little boy before such a large company."

41

A pedant having a house to sell carried about a stone from it to show as a sample.

<sup>3</sup> *Pudet me auctorem fuisse ut pecunias erogaretis in coronas quibus non iam opus est.* — EBERHARD.

## JESTS OF HIEROCLES

42

Two pedants were out walking when one dropped behind a little to attend to an urgent matter. Finding written upon a mile-stone by the other, "Overtake me," he wrote, "And do you wait for me?"

43

A pedant hearing several people remarking that "Your beard is coming," went to the gate to meet it. A companion asking the reason and having learned it, said, "We are rightly called fools, for how do you know if it did not come through the other gate?"

44

A pedant who slept with his father used to stand up in his bed at night and eat the grapes that were hanging from above. On one occasion after he had arisen, his father who had hidden the lamp under a jar, displayed the light unexpectedly, and the pedant standing upright began to snore, pretending to be asleep.

28

AND PHILAGRIUS

44 b

Another person who was going away wrote to a pedant that he should buy him some books. But he regarded the request lightly and said to him on his return, "I did not receive your letter which you sent concerning the books."

45

A pedant visited his mother by night and being beaten for this by his father, he said, "It is only a short time since you were with my mother and you suffered nothing from me, and now you are angry at finding me once with my mother."

46

An agent reported to a pedant that the river had taken away a place of his. And he making an outcry, replied, saying, "It is overpowering us."

47

A pedant after a space of time came near his field and saw the cattle going out to pasture. Perceiving them bleating as is their custom, he asked the reason. The

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

steward jestingly said, "They are welcoming you." The pedant replied, "Give them my kind regards, and because I have a vacation do not drive them to pasture for three days."

48

A pedant was tying on some new sandals. When they squeaked he paused and said, "Do not squeak or you will injure your two legs."<sup>4</sup>

49

A pedant beholding the moon asked his father whether other cities also possessed moons.

50

A pedant who was a money lender told a sailor, one of his debtors, to furnish him with a cinerary urn and also for his eight year old boys two slave girls of the right size with allowance for growth.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The sense is not clear; Eberhard gives two readings with the conclusion *utrum verius sit diiudicabit qui intellexerit*.

<sup>5</sup> There seems to be some confusion in the text of this anecdote, *sententiam non bene perspicio*.

## AND PHILAGRIUS

51

A pedant seeing in his field a deep well asked if the water were good. When the farmers answered that, "It is good, for your ancestors drank from it." He replied, "And what long necks they must have had in order to drink from such depths."

52

A pedant having fallen into a pit called out continually to summon help. When no one answered, he said to himself, "I am a fool if I do not give all a beating when I get out in order that in the future they shall answer me and furnish me with a ladder."

53

A pedant was dining with his father when some large lettuces having many tender sprouts were placed before them. Said he, "You, father, eat the children, and I will eat the mother."

54

A pedant was writing to his father from Athens and being vain because he had been

31

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

educated, he added, "I pray you to seek to be the defendant in a trial for your life in order that I may show you *the* public speaker."

55

A shrewd pedant being in great straits on account of expenses sold his books and writing to his father, he said, "Congratulate me, for already my books support me."

56

A pedant and a bald headed man and a barber were travelling together and pitching camp in a wild section they agreed that each one should stay awake four hours and guard their possessions. It fell to the barber to watch first. Desiring to play a trick, he shaved the head of the sleeping pedant, and his watch being finished, he woke up the latter. The pedant rubbing his head on awakening and finding himself bare, he said, "What a worthless fellow is that barber, he has made a mistake and wakened the bald-headed man instead of myself."

## AND PHILAGRIUS

57

A father advised a pedant who had a child born to him of a slave woman to do away with the child. He replied, "First bury your own children before you advise me to destroy mine."

58

A pedant had entered a bath and the attendant poured some warm water over his feet. "You good-for-nothing," he exclaimed, "do you pour warm water over a cold man?" (This means also, silly person, a cool knave).<sup>6</sup>

59

A pedant having heard from someone that he dined on a good, fat, gamey bird, went to the poulterer and said, "Kill for me a gamey bird."

60

A pedant having an estate many miles

<sup>6</sup> Evidently the pedant thought that the temperature of the water should be the same as that of the bather.

33



### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

away in order to make it nearer he destroyed seven milestones.

61

A pedant who was a hedge schoolmaster having looked of a sudden towards the corner, cried, "Dionysius is disorderly in the corner." When someone said that he had not come, he replied, "When he does come."

62

A pedant was at the annual games which every thousand years are held in Rome, and seeing an athlete who had been beaten giving vent to his grief, he spoke cheering words and said, "Do not grieve, you will win in the next thousand year contest."

63

A pedant went to walk with a guide who was blind in his right eye and when he had gone out into the vineyard and praised the grapes on the right side, "When we come back," he said, "those on the other side will please you also."

34

AND PHILAGRIUS

64

A pedant had purchased a pair of breeches and since they were very tight and he had difficulty in getting into them, he pulled all the hair off himself.<sup>7</sup>

65

A son of a pedant being sent to battle by his father promised to return bringing the head of one of the foes. He replied, "Even though I see you coming without any head I shall be glad."

66

A pedant seeing in the river a ship filled with grain and drawing a great deal of water, said, "If the river should rise a little the boat would be sunk."

<sup>7</sup> Boissonade takes this in a different sense. The word translated "pulled the hair off himself" may also be read "daubed with pitch." Liddell and Scott give "to remove the hair by means of a pitch-plaster, a custom among women and effeminate men." Boissonade interprets it "*bracas picabat opinatus scilicet se sic eas facere laeves.*" There may be some hidden meaning here.

## JESTS OF HIEROCLES

67

A pedant having returned from a trip abroad and meeting his father-in-law was asked by the latter how his school-fellow was getting on. He replied, "It is very well with him; he is in good spirits for he has buried his wife's father."

68

A pedant having written out a legal document about a certain matter read it in public. When his advocate said that he did an extraordinary thing in making known to his opponents the secret points of his case, he answered, "You scamp, am I saying anything about the essentials?"

69

A pedant visited the parents of a school-fellow who had died. The father bewailing, said, "Child, thou hast distressed me," and the mother exclaimed, "Child, thou hast deprived me of the light of my eyes," the pedant remarked to his companions, "If these things have been done by him,

36

AND PHILAGRIUS

he should be cremated even if he were living."

70

A pedant went away to visit a sick friend. When his wife said that "He is already departed," (i.e. dead), he replied, "If he comes back tell him that I called."

71

A pedant when he had received a pattern of length and breadth for a table cloth, bringing it into the house, looked at it and asked, "Which is length and which is breadth?"<sup>8</sup>

72

A pedant was a guest at a wedding feast, when the time came for withdrawing he said, "I pray you may be fortunate and that you may always do these things."

73

The same person said that the mauso-

<sup>8</sup>The text of this anecdote is evidently corrupt, I have adopted the suggestion of Eberhard "*quid sit ἀκρόπυρρον* cum Boissonadio ignoro; videtur tamen genus quoddam amiculi vel lintei in mensa ponendi significari."

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

leum of Skrebonias was beautiful and very costly but was built in an unhealthy place.

74

A certain person meeting a pedant who had a very thin horse, said, "The horse is looking into the grave." The pedant replied, "And so am I."

75

A pedant who was ill became hungry and when four o'clock was not announced, disbelieving his servants, he ordered the sun-dial to be brought to him.

76

The priest upon giving the suppliant's olive branch to a pedant who was entering the temple of Serapis, said, "The god be propitious to you." He replied, "The god be propitious to my little pig for I do not need it."

77

A pedant had buried his son and meeting his teacher, he said, "Pray excuse it because my son did not go to school, he is dead."

38

AND PHILAGRIUS

78

A pedant had some valuable old paintings and was taking them from Corinth. Putting them in a ship he said to the owners of the boat, "If you lose these I shall demand new ones of you."

79

An attendant handed to a pedant a cup that was boiling over. The latter placed it upon the table, "Thus let it remain," he said, "until your teacher comes and may find it boiling."

80

A pedant was on a voyage and the boat was in danger from the storm; his fellow-passengers were throwing away their belongings in order that the boat might be lightened and he was exhorted to do the same. Having a bond of a hundred and fifty thousand drachams he expunged the fifty. "See," he said, "how much I have lightened the ship."

81

A pedant was on board a vessel when a

39

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

storm arising his fellow-passengers began to call out. "Why are you so penurious?" he asked. "I, by having paid ten Attic drachmas more, sail at the captain's risk."

#### 82

Some one threw a pot of filth over a pedant who had climbed a wall during a battle. Crying out, he exclaimed, "Are you not willing to strike me clean?"

#### 83

A pedant as a boat went ashore in the river Rhine crouched under the deck of the boat and thought he was shoving it upwards.<sup>9</sup>

#### 84

The same said to the soldiers, "To-morrow it is necessary to make a long march, therefore to-day sit down as many times as possible."

<sup>9</sup> Eberhard brackets the following which is found in the manuscript "not understanding that by pressing with his feet he was shoving it downwards."

AND PHILAGRIUS

85

A pedant had moved into a new house and wrote before the porch that had been cleaned, "Whoever throws filth here loses it."<sup>10</sup>

86

A father was about to strike a pedant who had lost a denarius. He said, "Do not be angry and I will pay for the denarius from my possessions."

87

A pedant taking the character of a gladiator was playing before the house. Suddenly some one announced to him that his father was close by, he threw aside his weapon and undid his leggings. But his father arriving and standing by him, he opened a book and began to read still having the helmet on.

88

A pedant when he was going up a steep

<sup>10</sup> The joke is a trifle obscure; it probably means "does so at his own risk," i.e. the owner of the house will not be responsible for any loss.



### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

ascent on his way home was surprised and said, "When I came down here before it was a descent, how does it change so suddenly and become an ascent?"

89

A pedant whilst voyaging asked the helmsman what hour it was. Upon his replying that he did not know, he asked how long a time he had steered the boat. He answered three years. "How is it," he asked, "that I having bought a house six months before, when the sun comes into the court yard guess at the hour, but you are not able to reckon from the boat having steered it for such a long time?"

90

A pedant, a sophist, who was considered worthy to write epitaphs of the dead, wrote an epitaph of one still living who called upon him regarding this thing. He said, "Since you do not choose when you shall die, do you wish me to write off-hand in order to be put to shame?"

42

AND PHILAGRIUS

91

A pedant had invited his school-fellows to a banquet when they praised the pig's head and considered it worthy. The next day he arranged a banquet at his house, and going to the cook-shop, he said, "Give me another head of this pig, for the one yesterday pleased us very much."

92

A pedant asked his father, "How much does a five-cup flask hold?"

93

A pedant learning of some one about a ladder that it had twenty steps going up, asked if it had as many going down.

94

Several people were talking about indigestion, a pedant said he never suffered from indigestion. Being asked if he never regurgitated bitter or nauseous stuff, he replied, "I do this every day."

95

A son was born to a pedant. Being asked by someone what name would be given

43

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

him, he replied, "He shall have my name, and I shall get along somehow."

96

There were two cowardly pedants, one hid himself in a well and the other in a clump of reeds. When the soldiers let down a helmet to draw up water, one thinking a soldier was coming took to entreaties. When the soldiers said that if he had kept quiet he would have been overlooked, the one hidden in the reeds calling out, said, "Then pass me by for I am keeping silent."

97

A pedant whose wife had died bought a coffin and was haggling about the price. When the dealer swore that he would not sell it for less than five thousand drachmas, he said, "Since you have made an oath, take the five thousand drachmas, but for good measure throw in a little coffin, in order that if it should be required for my child, it may be ready."

98

A companion meeting a pedant said, "I

44

AND PHILAGRIUS

congratulate you because a son is born to you." And he answered, "Let your friends do the same to you."

99

A certain person said to a pedant, "Lend me a cloak as far as the field." He replied, "I have one as far as the ankle, but I do not possess one as far as the field."<sup>11</sup>

100

A pedant was riding in a carriage drawn by mules when the animals becoming exhausted were not able to go further. The driver unhitched them to rest them a little, whereupon being freed they ran away. The pedant said to the driver, "You good-for-nothing, you see that the mules ran, but the carriage is the reason why they were not able to run before."

101

A pedant seeing twin brothers was astonished at their likeness and said, "This

<sup>11</sup> *Mechris de tempore intellegit alter, alter de longitudine birri.* — EBERHARD.

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

one is not so much like to that one as that one is to this."

102

A certain person said to a pedant, "Friend, three days ago I saw you in a dream." "It is false," he replied, "for I was on a vacation in the country."

103

A pedant was talking with two companions. One of them said that it was not just to slaughter a sheep, for it produced milk and wool abundantly; the other said that it was not fitting to kill a cow which produced milk and could be used for plowing; the pedant said neither was it right to kill a young porker which furnished liver, and bacon, and kidneys.

## From The Philogelos

104

A miser in writing his will appointed himself the heir.<sup>12</sup>

105

A miser being asked by a certain person why he ate nothing but olives, replied, "In order that I may have the outside instead of meat, the inside in place of fire-wood, and when I eat them by wiping my head with a sponge I do not lack a bath."

106

A braggart deceived his female associates on the ground that he was well born and wealthy. When he was dining at the neighbour's expense he suddenly saw his friend, turning he shouted, "Send to me a cloak adorned with gold pins."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> This is evidently from Lucilius - Anth Graec, xi, 171.

## JESTS OF HIEROCLES

107

In like manner another person, a perfect boaster, poor in goods, happened to be sick when his female associate coming unexpectedly saw him lying upon a mat. Being ashamed he blamed the physicians, saying, "The good and learned physicians of the city ordered me to lie upon a mat."

108

A braggart seeing his servant in the market place having lately come from the field, he said, "What are the sheep doing?" He replied, "One is lying down to sleep, and one is standing up."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> I have followed Boissonade in the translation, the word *φεβλαρώριον* not found in Liddell and Scott. *Mitte meum mihi pallium illud aureis ornatum fibulis.* — BOISSONADE.

<sup>14</sup> *Quod videtur significare 'altera iacet, altera stat,' duas enim omnino habuit oves iactor.* — EBERHARD. The question was evidently put to impress the bystanders with his pretended wealth; the servant discloses that he owns only two sheep.

AND PHILAGRIUS

109

A fool having heard that in Hades judgments are rendered without favour, and having a law suit, he went and hanged himself.



# The Men of Abdera

## 110

In Abdera the city is divided into two parts, those who dwell in the east and those in the west. On an occasion enemies attacked the city unexpectedly and everyone was in an uproar. Those who lived in the eastern part said to the others, "We are not disturbed, for the enemies will enter at the western gates."

## 111

In Abdera an ass entered the gymnasium unseen and upset the olive oil. The citizens assembling sent for all the asses in the city. Having brought them into one place, as a warning they flogged the ass before them all.

## 112

A citizen of Abdera desired to hang himself when the rope broke and he struck

JESTS OF HIEROCLES AND PHILAGRIUS  
his head. After he had obtained a plaster  
from a physician and applied it to the  
wound he went and hanged himself again.

113

A man of Abdera seeing a eunuch with  
a rupture coming out of the bath, said,  
"He is sifted out, I mean by the attend-  
ant."<sup>15</sup>

114

A man of Abdera seeing a eunuch asked  
him how many children he had. Upon his  
saying that lacking manly parts he was not  
able to beget children, in answer he re-  
plied, "At least you must have many  
grandchildren."

115

A man of Adbera beholding a eunuch  
talking with a woman asked if she were  
his wife. The eunuch replied that he was

<sup>15</sup> The translator does not get the point of this  
joke: Eberhard offers no emendation, he says,  
"*ego manum abstineo, cum sententia totius his-  
toriolae mihi non liqueat. an habet Abderita  
hermosum pro παπαύτη?*"

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

not able to have a wife. "Perhaps she is your daughter?" he persisted.

116

A luckless eunuch of Abdera became ruptured.<sup>16</sup>

117

A man of Abdera was sleeping with a ruptured person and in the night having risen to attend to a matter and on his returning, it being dark, he stepped involuntarily on the rupture. When the ruptured man cried out, he said, "Why do you sleep head downwards?"<sup>17</sup>

118

A citizen of Abdera whilst out walking saw a ruptured person making water and

<sup>16</sup> *Non intellego fragmenti qui sit iocus.*  
— EBERHARD.

<sup>17</sup> *Sed neque illud κατακέφαλα bene perspicio neque illud πρὸς ξαντὸν ἀναστὰς num sensu obsceno intellegendum ut supra D.45? tum praestaret πρὸς αὐτόν. κατακέφαλα autem ita videtur explicare posse ut significet Abderitam pede caput herniosi se tetigisse putare.*— EBERHARD.

AND PHILAGRIUS

remarked, "He would not finish making water till evening."<sup>18</sup>

119

A man of Abdera seeing a ruptured person coming out of the bath and staggering, said to him, "Why have you filled yourself up so greedily, when you have hardly strength to carry anything?" (*sc.* wine).<sup>19</sup>

120

A citizen of Abdera having heard that onions and turnips cause wind and being on a voyage when there was a great sea, having filled a sack he hung it from the stern of the boat.

121

A citizen of Abdera seeing a runner

<sup>18</sup> *Credebat homo stolidus herniae praegrandem tumorem esse vesicam, quae prae humoris saccati abundantia turgebat eratque prominentior.* — BOISSONADE.

<sup>19</sup> The speaker is playing on the two words "fill" and "carry" the latter being applied to carrying a load of wine. Compare our expression, "well loaded."

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

stretched out upon a cross, said, "By the gods, he no longer runs, but flies."

122

A man of Abdera was selling a dish without handles (ears). Being asked why it had no ears, he replied, "Lest hearing that it was to be sold it might run away."

123

A citizen of Abdera according to custom cremated his father who had died, running to his home to his mother who was ill, he exclaimed, "There is some wood remaining. If you wish and are able you may burn yourself with it."

124

A man of Abdera dreamed that he was selling a porker and demanded a hundred denarii for it. Some one offered fifty but he was not willing to take that sum, then he awoke. Closing his eyes again and stretching out his hand, he said, "Give me the fifty."

125

A little sparrow belonging to a citizen

54

AND PHILAGRIUS

of Abdera died. After some time on beholding an ostrich, he said, "If my sparrow had lived, it would already have been as large."<sup>20</sup>

126

A citizen of Abdera having gone to Rhodes smelled at the walls because of the name (rose) of the place.

127

A man of Abdera owed a young ass to a certain person and because he did not possess one, he begged that he might furnish two mules (half asses) in its place.

<sup>20</sup> The joke lies in the fact that the word "sparrow" forms part of the word "ostrich."

## The Men of Sidonia

128

A Sidonian prefect was riding in a chariot drawn by mules when the animals being exhausted were not able to proceed further. The driver unhitched them in order to rest them a little by pasturing. However, being free they ran away, and the prefect said to the driver, "You see, worthless one, that the mules ran away, but the chariot stands still not being able to run."

129

A Sidonian orator was talking with two companions, one of them said that it was not right to slaughter sheep because they furnished milk and wool, the other said that it was not right to kill cows which provided milk and plowed, the orator said it was not fitting to kill young porkers

JESTS OF HIEROCLES AND PHILAGRIUS  
which furnished liver and bacon and kidneys.

130

A Sidonian sophist at the first opening of the bath went to wash and finding no one within, says to his own servants, "As far as I can see it doesn't wash."

131

A Sidonian having an estate many miles away and wishing to bring it nearer, overthrew seven mile-stones.

132

A Sidonian manager was walking with a companion when he dropped behind a little to attend to a matter of importance and having stopped for some time his fellow traveller left him after writing on the mile-stone, "Make haste and overtake me." When he read it he wrote above, "And do you wait for me."

133

A certain person said to a Sidonian fisherman, "Your fishing-pot holds crabs."



### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

And he being very angry, replied, "Your breast has a cancer (crab)."

134

A Sidonian centurian said to the soldiers, "To-day sit down a great deal, for to-morrow you must march a great deal."

135

Some one said to a Sidonian wax chandler, "You, sir, have things to burn." He growing angry, replied, "You, sir, have boils (coals)."

136

A grammarian of Sidonia asked his teacher, "How much does a five-cup flask hold?" He answered, "Did you say wine or oil?"

137

A certain person said to a cook of Sidonia, "Lend me a knife as far as Smyrna." He replied, "I haven't a knife that will reach that far."

138

A centurian from Sidonia seeing an ox driver leading his wagon through the mar-

AND PHILAGRIUS

ket place ordered him to be beaten. But he said, "I am a Roman, and it is not lawful to strike me because of the law." The centurian ordered the oxen to be beaten.

139

A Sidonian physician was to receive a legacy of a thousand drachmas from one of his patients for burying him after his death. When he was buried he attended the funeral and found fault that he had left him a small legacy. Some time after, the son of the departed falling ill summoned him for an examination and to contend with the disease. The physician said, "If you should leave five thousand drachmas for a legacy, I will attend you as I did your father."

## The Witty Fellows

140

A witty fellow, seeing a dull professor of grammar teaching, approached him and asked why he didn't teach the lute. When the latter answered, "I do not understand," he replied, "How can you teach grammar if you do not understand?" <sup>21</sup>

141

A witty helmsman, asked what was raising the wind, replied, "Bean soup and onions."

142

A physician who was a rogue was treating a witty fellow for sore eyes. Under the guise of borrowing he stole a lamp. One day he asked the patient, "How are your eyes?" The wit replied, "Since you borrowed the lamp, I do not see."

<sup>21</sup> A similar story is related by Stobaeus, *Flor.*, iv, 70. "*Diogenes Cynicus hanc de se narrat historiam epistola pseudonyma sexta.*" — BOISSONADE.

JESTS OF HIEROCLES AND PHILAGRIUS

143

A certain person said to a witty physician, "I have many boils (coals)." The latter replied, "If you had a boiler you would not lack for boiling water."

144

A witty fellow perceiving a lazy runner said, "I know what this my master needs." Being asked by the director of the games, "What is it?" he answered, "He needs a horse, for otherwise he is not able to overtake his opponents."

145

A witty tradesman finding a sergeant with his wife, said, "I found what I did not seek."

146

A shrewd fellow having stolen a young pig was fleeing. When he was overtaken, he placed the pig on the ground and giving it a thwack, said, "Root there, and not among my possessions."

147

A witty fellow beholding a screeching

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

and tuneless harp player greeted him, saying, "Hail Mr. Cock." Being asked why he hailed him thus, he replied, "Because when you crow everyone wakes up." <sup>22</sup>

148

A witty fellow being asked by a chattering barber, "How shall I cut it?" replied, "In silence." <sup>23</sup>

149

A witty fellow whilst in the bath was insulted by someone and he brought forward the attendants as witnesses. The defendant objecting that they were not worthy of credence, he said, "If one were insulted in the wooden horse, he would bring as witnesses Menelaus, and Odysseus, and Diomedes; but the insult taking place in the bath, of necessity the attendants know the matter better."

150

A witty fellow, when two persons de-

<sup>22</sup> *Diogenes Laertius*, vi, 2, 48, has a similar story.

<sup>23</sup> This story is told by Plutarch, *Arch.* 2.

AND PHILAGRIUS

sired a scraper from him outside the bath, by one unknown to him and by the second who was an acquaintance but a thief, replied, "Knowing you, I shall not give it, and not knowing you I shall not give it."

151

A witty fellow seeing a brothel-keeper hiring a black inmate, asked, "How much wages do you pay (to) the night?"

152

Two shrewd fellows were complaining to one another with regard to putting their fathers out of the way. One said to the other, "In order that we may not be called parricides by any, you kill my father, and I will do away with yours, and we shall escape an evil report."

153

A shrewd fellow whilst wrestling fell in the mud and in order that he might not seem to be clumsy, he got up entirely covered with mud and stood conceitedly through the whole contest.

## The Men of Cumæ

154

In Cumæ whilst they were paying the last rites to a distinguished person, a certain one arriving asked the spectators, "Who is the departed?" One of the Cumæans having turned about, pointed saying, "He who is lying upon the bier."

155

A certain person meeting a Cumæan who had a horse for sale, asked if the horse had thrown once (its first teeth). When he replied that it had thrown twice, he said, "How do you know?" He answered, "Once he threw me down and once my father."

156

A citizen of Cumæ having a house for sale carried about as a sample a stone that had fallen from it.

## JESTS OF HIEROCLES AND PHILAGRIUS

157

A citizen of Cumæ who had a horse for sale was asked if it were not timid. He answered, "No, by my deliverance, for he has only stood in the stable."

158

A citizen of Cumæ having bought some stolen garments, in order that they might not be recognized, daubed them with pitch.

159

A Cumæan having made a large threshing floor, stood opposite his wife and asked if she saw him. When she replied she scarcely saw him, he replied, "But at the proper season I shall make a threshing floor so large that neither I may see you, nor you may see me."

160

A Cumæan visiting a friend called him by name in front of the house. A companion saying, "Call out louder in order that he may hear," forgetting the name which he knew he shouted, "Louder."

65



## JESTS OF HIEROCLES

161

A Cumæan, plotting against the home of a money-lender and desiring to steal the largest booty, he picked out the paper that weighed the most.

162

When the Cumæans were fortifying their city one of the citizens named Lollianus fortified two sections at his own charges. When the enemies made an attack the Cumæans growing angry cried out as with one voice that no one should guard the wall of Lollianus but he alone.

163

The Cumæans were expecting from a long journey an eminent friend of theirs and desired to honour him by providing clean water in the bath. Having only one swimming-bath, and filling this with warm water they placed a perforated grating in the middle of it in order that the half of the water might be kept clean for their expected friend.

66

AND PHILAGRIUS

164

A Cumæan was in swimming when it began to rain and in order not to get wet he went down into the deep water.

165

A Cumæan purchasing some windows asked if it were possible to look at the meridian.

166

A citizen of Cumæ seated upon his ass rode alongside an orchard. Seeing a branch of a fig-tree hanging above full of ripe figs he laid hold of the branch. His ass going on he was left hanging. Being asked by the gardener what he was doing hanging there, he said, "I have fallen off my ass."

167

A Cumæan seeing a sheep with feet bound together and being sheared, said, "I am thankful to my master that he has never tied me up and sheared me."

168

A Cumæan whose father was away from

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

home fell under a heavy indictment and was sentenced to death. As he went away he exhorted everyone not to tell his father else he would beat him to death.

169

The same person answered when some one said, "You have cheated me," "Shall I go back where I came from if I cheated you?"

170

A certain person asked a Cumæan where Drakontides the rhetorician lived. "I am alone," he replied, "but if you desire, guard the shop, and I will go along and show you."

171

The father of a Cumæan living in Alexandria having died, he took the body to the embalmers. After awhile he went to take it away. But other bodies had been received and being asked what mark his father's body had by which he might be recognized, he replied, "He had a bad cough."

68

AND PHILAGRIUS

172

A Cumæan beholding a pugilist having many wounds asked whence he got them. Upon the latter answering, "From the cestus (*also* ant)," he said, "Why do you sleep upon the ground?"

173

A man of Cumæ was offering some honey for sale. When a certain person coming and tasting it said that it was not good, he replied, "If a mouse had not fallen into it, I would not sell it."

174

A physician gave up a sick Cumæan in despair, and he getting well, shunned the physician. Being asked the reason, he said, "He told me I was going to die, and I am ashamed to be alive."

175

A physician of Cumæ having brought a sick person from tertian fever to semiter-tian, demanded half his fee.

175 b

A pedant coming to a physician of

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

Cumæ said, "Sir, when I wake up from sleep, for half an hour----wake up."

176

A Cumæan physician gave an enema to a person who was desperately ill and later came to inspect the excrement. When they showed it and said that he died, the physician with an oath answered thus, "If he had not been relieved he would have burst."

177

A physician of Cumæ was operating on one who was suffering intense pain and crying out, so he employed a duller lancet.

178

Two Cumæans bought two dishes of dried figs. Each of the men secretly ate up the figs from the other's dish and not from his own. When they had finished their business each one turning to his own property found it empty. Taking hold of one another they went to the judge and the judge hearing the case ordered them to ex-

AND PHILAGRIUS

change excrements and to pay one another thereby.

179

In Cumæ a demagogue was denounced in assembly. "Fellow citizens," he said, "these who have told lies about me are professional slanderers. Let it be decided by you against them. If I have done any such things, let the theatre fall upon me alone while you are seated in judgment."

180

A Cumæan archon caused the following proclamation to be announced: "Let the overseers immediately after the sacrifice carry their own hides to the priest. Let the counsellors enter the council hall and not take council together. Let the cooks throw their own bones over the wall, and the shoemakers must not have small shoe-lasts."

181

A company of Cumæans were being sent away by vote and knowing many from other cities left behind, blaming the road, they

71

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

said, "Would we not be fools if we should not also come in the future?"

182

A Cumæan was operating on a wounded head and having placed the sufferer on his back he poured water into his mouth in order that he might see through the cut when it flowed out.

# The Discontented People

183

A certain person coming to a peevish physician said, "Master, I am not able to recline, nor to stand, nor to sit down." And the physician replied, "There is nothing left for you but to be hung up."

184

One said to a cross-grained physician, "What shall I do because blood and gall come down?" And the latter replied to him, "Even if your bowels should be thrown out, I should not be galled."

185

A peevish one-eyed physician asked a sick man, "How are you?" He replied, "As you see me." The physician said, "If you are as I see, then half of you is dead."

186

A physician coming to a peevish person



### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

and having examined him, said, "You have a bad fever." And he replying, said, "If you are able to have a better fever, there is the bed, lie upon it and have your fever."

187

A cross-grained astrologer was predicting that a child would be sick but told the mother that it would be a long time in the future, and demanded his pay. When she said, "I will come to-morrow and give it," he replied, "Wherefore? If he should die during the night I should lose my fee."

188

A cross-grained fellow had a jar of honey for sale and being asked by someone how much he would sell it for, he overturned the jar, saying, "You may pour out my heart's blood like this before I tell you."

189

A physician visiting a peevish patient ordered him to eat a small piece of bread with a sparrow. The patient asked, "How am I able to enter the coop in order to eat the crumbs with the sparrow?"

AND PHILAGRIUS

190

A peevish person was playing dice when a certain shiftless one sitting down spread himself out. Becoming angry he asked him, "Of what trade are you, and why are you idle?" When he answered that "I am a tailor but I have no work," tearing his cloak and giving it to him, he said, "Take it, get busy, and keep quiet."

191

A certain person asked a cross-grained fellow, "Where do you live?" And he replied, "I am just coming from there."

192

A certain person meeting a peevish sea captain, said, "I saw your entrance (*also* caul) into Rhodes." He replied, "And I saw your liver in Sicily."

193

A person called on a cross-grained fellow who said, "I am not at home." The visitor laughingly said, "You are fibbing, for I hear your voice." "You good-for-nothing," he replied, "if my servant said it you would

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

have believed him, am I not more worthy of belief than he?"

194

A peevish individual was going down stairs when he tripped and fell headlong. The head-servant asking, "Who is there within?" he replied, "I am making a noise in my own house, what is that to you?"

195

Some one said to a crabbed counsellor, "I would like to see and speak with you a little (*also* small in stature)." But he replied, "And I am willing to see you blind and lame."

## The Awkward Ones

196

An awkward grammarian was asked,  
"What ought one to say, two or twain?"  
And he stretching out his hand showed  
two fingers.

197

An unskilled grammarian was asked,  
"What was Priam's mother called?" Be-  
ing at a loss he replied, "We call her lady  
out of respect."

198

An awkward barber used to put plaster  
on those whom he wounded. When one  
blamed him, he said, "You ungrateful fel-  
low, you are foolishly vexed, for being  
shaved at the price of one denarius, you  
have taken four denarii worth of plaster."

199

An awkward apprentice, having trim-

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

med the nails of a person badly and having caused a whitlow, on account of which he was driven away by the one who was deprived of nails, shouted back, "Master, why did you not send me away to have learnt?"

200

An awkward apprentice being commanded by the overseer to trim the nails of his mistress shed tears. Being asked the reason, he said, "I am afraid and I weep, I might injure you and cause a whitlow, and the overseer will beat me."

201

A certain person returning from a trip abroad came to an unskilled soothsayer and asked about his household. He replied, "They are all well including your father." Upon his saying, "My father has been dead these ten years past," the sage answered, "You do not know the truth about your father."

202

An unskilled soothsayer was casting a

#### AND PHILAGRIUS

horoscope for a child about to be born, he said, "He will be a rhetor, then a captain, then a general." The child having died, the mother in demanding back her fee, said, "He whom you said would be a rhetor and captain and general has died." He replied, "By my memory, if he had lived he would have been all those."

203

A certain person coming to an unskilled diviner asked if his enemy had returned from a journey. He said that he had not come. As he learned several days later that he was at home, he said, "Nothing is more shameless than he."

204

An unskilled soothsayer speaking at length to a certain person, said, "It was not possible for you as concerning descendants to beget offspring." Upon his replying, "I have seven children," he said, "Then devote your attention to them."

205

An awkward diviner fell into the hands

#### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

of enemies and said, "I am a soothsayer." When they were about to join in battle with their adversaries, he said, "You will conquer the enemy, if they do not steal the hair on the back part of your head in the battle array."<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> The text seems to be corrupt, I have made the best I could out of it. "*Mihi sententia non liquet.*" — EBERHARD.

## The Timid Ones

206

A timid fellow was asked, "Which boat is the safer, the long boat (the man-of-war), or the round boat (merchant vessel)?" He replied, "The ship hauled up on land."<sup>25</sup>

207

A timid huntsman was continually being pursued by a bear at night in his sleep. Having purchased some dogs he had them sleep with him.

208

Some one said to a faint-hearted boxer, "With whom are you to fight?" And he pointing to his adversary, said, "With my master here."

<sup>25</sup> "The same (i.e. Anacharsis the Scythian), when asked what ships were the safest? replied, 'Those in dock.'" *Diog. Laert.*, i, 8, 104.

81



## JESTS OF HIEROCLES

209

A cowardly pugilist was being continually pounded by his adversary, he cried out, "I beg of you, not all at once."

210

A timid pugilist having purchased an estate asked the people of the place if it did not have ants (*also* the cestus).

211

Two timid fellows were sleeping together when a thief entering in and having dragged off the coverlet stole it. One of them becoming aware of it said to the other, "Get up and overtake the person who has stolen the coverlet." The latter replied, "Let him go, when he returns to take the bolster, the two of us will capture him."

212

A father commanded his son who was a timid fellow to go to a neighbor and borrow an ax. He said, "He will not give it." His father still waiting, he answered, "I am your neighbor and do not possess an ax."

## AND PHILAGRIUS

213

A timid fellow was owed a denarius by another, and meeting him he demanded the piece of money. Upon his replying, "Stretch out your hand and open my breeches pocket and take the denarius," the other said, "Pass on, you do not owe me anything from that quarter."

214

Another fellow on account of cowardice wrote upon his forehead, "This is a vital place." Being struck continually he said to the one who struck him, "Can't you read, and do you kill me?"

215

A cowardly pugilist being continually struck by his adversary, cried out, "I beg of you, not all at the same time."

## The Misers

216

A miserly fellow having entered a fuller's shop and not being willing to make water, he died.

217

An envious fellow who had a house for rent, seeing the inhabitants happy, banished them from his house.

218

An envious fellow seeing his neighbor fighting with a wild beast, said to the guide, "I wager on the bear."<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> The text is hopelessly corrupt. I can not understand why the guide should be standing idly by if the bear were overcoming his opponent. "*Corriget qui intellexerit. Locus omnino turbatus, nam etiam quae sequuntur narrationes 217 et 218 non agunt de invidiosis sed ignavis.*"  
- EBERHARD.

# The Starvelings

219

A person wasted with hunger having given his daughter in marriage to another such man, and asking what he would give her as a marriage portion, he said, "I give a house, the windows of which look into a bake-shop."

220

A trainer of boys wasted with hunger seeing a loaf of bread hung up, said, "Will you enter the arena? do you bring tidings? or do I ascend to make you ready?"

221

A physician who was very hungry seeing a loaf of bread lying in a hole, applied a plaster to draw it out.

222

A physician examining a sick person who was wasted with hunger, ordered pulse for

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

him as a beverage, but if pulse could not be found, to make for him in like manner a gruel of groats and spelt (this also means "goat"). The hungry man said, "If I do not find a goat, I will eat two kids."

#### 223

A hungry person seeing a loaf of bread in a niche over a door lintel, said, "Hurry, either lift me up or make that lower."

#### 224

A hungry fellow going to a gardener gave him four denarii in order that he might eat as many figs as he wished. Looking down on him in contempt and saying, "From the trees close at hand eat as many as you are able." Going to the largest fig trees and beginning at the top he devoured all. After some time the gardener having remembered him sought him out. When he saw him shaking the topmost boughs and eating, he became angry and said, "Come down, can you not eat from the boughs lower down?" He replied, "I shall eat those as I come down."

A starveling having entered a bake-shop offered to pay two denarii in order that he might eat his fill of bread. Reckoning that one loaf was sufficient for him, and having taken the denarii, he began to munch. Beginning with the basket, he ate the half standing up. The bread-seller being astonished and saying, "Sit down and eat thus," he replied, "I wish to eat the loaves in the basket standing up, and those on the counter sitting down."

A starveling actor of comedy asked the director for breakfast before his entering upon the stage. Being asked why he wished to breakfast beforehand, he replied. "In order that I may not swear a false oath when I say

By Artemis, I have breakfasted  
Very pleasantly."

## About Drunkards

227

A certain person sitting beside a tipsy man drinking in a tavern, said, "Your wife is dead." Hearing that, he said to the inn-keeper, "Therefore, waiter, mix some dark wine."

228

A tipsy fellow being reproached by certain persons that drinking so much he was not in his senses, but he not being able to see clearly, on account of the wine, replied, "Am I drunk, or you who have two faces?"

229

A luckless drunkard having acquired a vineyard, died before the time of vintage.

230

A drunkard opening a wine shop barred the door.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> The meaning of this anecdote is not clear,

## JESTS OF HIEROCLES AND PHILAGRIUS

there are two emendations proposed, "bear" and "beam." Did he tie a bear in the vestibule as a sign or to prevent others from entering to purchase the wine which he wished to drink himself? I have taken the word as "beam," which he placed before the door to bar entrance.



## About Those With Bad Breath

231

A person with a bad breath wishing to commit suicide and having wrapped up his head he opened his mouth wide.

232

A person with bad breath continually caressing his wife, said, "My lady, my Hera, my Aphrodite." And she turning away, said, "My Zeus, my Zeus" (an aspirate makes it read "stench").<sup>28</sup>

233

A person with bad breath meeting an acquaintance, said, "Hail," the other replied, "Faugh!" Upon his asking, "What did I say?" the other answered, "You broke wind."

<sup>28</sup> The translation cannot convey the distinction made by the aspirate, I have endeavoured to indicate it in parenthesis.

## JESTS OF HIEROCLES AND PHILAGRIUS

234

A person with offensive breath asked his wife, "Why do you hate me?" She replied saying, "Because you love me."

235

A person with bad breath meeting a physician, said, "My master, look whether my tonsils have not fallen down." And the physician turning away, said, "Your tonsils have not gone down by any means, but your guts are coming up."

236

A person with offensive breath was fondling his child and hugging it to his breast he breathed on it. The child turning away, said, "I don't like it, daddy, it's bad."<sup>29</sup>

237

A person with bad breath was cooking a tripe pudding and blowing upon it a great deal. When done he did not perceive it, because he was stinking continually.

<sup>29</sup> There is a double meaning here evidently in the words used by the child, the word for "bad" may also be the infantine "caca."

## JESTS OF HIEROCLES

238

A person with bad breath going to a fruit-seller's asked, "Sir, have you any dried figs?" But he turning away, said, "I have no dates either."<sup>80</sup>

239

A young man who was a tragedian was beloved of two women, one with bad breath and the other with an evil smelling skin. One said to him, "Sir, give me kisses," the other, "Sir, give me embraces," he cried out, "Alas! what shall I do? I am divided between two evils!"

240

A person with offensive breath and one with foul smelling skin were sitting together in the theatre when a young man happened to come up between them and sat down.

<sup>80</sup> There is evidently a double meaning for figs and dates that has been lost. "*Atque fortasse in v. ficus, aliquid latet turpitudinis.*" – BOISSONADE. An epigram by Philippus (second century A.D.?) and one by Marcus Argenteius in the *Anthology* of Planudes throws some light on the word "fig."

AND PHILAGRIUS

Becoming aware of the bad odor and turning to the one with the breath, he asked, "Who broke wind?" Discovering the cause from his mouth, he turned to the other and spoke in his ear. Recognizing the bad smell of that one, he rose up and took to flight.

241

A fool broke wind whilst sleeping with a deaf person who becoming aware of the evil smell, cried out, he said, "See how you hear; you were deceiving me."

242

A person with bad breath continually looking up to heaven prayed a great deal. Zeus looking askance, said, "Do me one favour; you have gods down there too."<sup>21</sup>

243

A lick-dish having been invited to the vintage by a friend and eating immoderately of figs and grapes, fell asleep. Being

<sup>21</sup> The meaning seems to be "direct your breath towards the gods you have down there."

### JESTS OF HIEROCLES

urged by his belly, he thought he saw his friend sitting in a fig tree and calling him to eat figs. Climbing up he gladly relieved himself of his burden from the top of the tree. Violently he befouled the couch. When he woke up he recognized what he had done. Having washed the couch and again having eaten too freely, he fell asleep. Again he beheld in his sleep his friend sitting in the tree and urging him to climb up in the same manner. But looking up at him he said, "You want to play a trick on me again that thinking I am easing myself from the top of the fig tree I shall besmire the couch. On the contrary, I will by no means be cheated again; first I shall relieve myself and thus climb up." Once more he violently befouled the couch.

244

A young man said to his wife who was voluptuous, "Wife, what shall we do? Do we eat breakfast or devote ourselves to the rites of Aphrodite?" She said to him, "As you please, we haven't a bite to eat."

AND PHILAGRIUS

245

A young man invited two lecherous old women to his house; he said to his household servants, "Mix wine for one, and devote to Aphrodite the one who wishes it." They replied, "We don't drink."

## Women Haters

246

A woman hater standing in the market place, said, "I offer my wife for sale without reserve." When some people said, "For what reason?" he replied, "In order that she may be bereaved."

247

A woman hater whose wife having died put on mourning at the funeral. When some one asked, "Who has entered into peace?" he answered, "I who am bereaved of this woman."

248

A woman hater having fallen ill was in despair. When his wife said to him, "If you should suffer anything, I shall strangle myself," looking up at her, he answered, "Do me this favour whilst I am living."

96

JESTS OF HIEROCLES AND PHILAGRIUS

249

A woman hater had a talkative and abusive wife and when she died he carried her to burial upon a large shield. Some one seeing this and asking the reason, he replied, "She was warlike."

•



## Miscellaneous

250

A young man being asked whether he was ordered about by his wife or if she were obedient to him, he answered conceitedly, "In all things my wife fears me so much, that if I open my mouth she befouls herself."

251

A mistress of a household had an apparent fool for a house servant and having perceived his parts, she felt a desire towards him. Having put a veil over her face in order that she might not be recognized she began to sport with him. And he during the play grew familiar with her. Laughing as was his custom, he said to the master of the house, "Master, master, I was familiar with the dancing girl, and the mistress was in her clothes."

JESTS OF HIEROCLES AND PHILAGRIUS

252

An unlucky eunuch became ruptured.

253

A pedant having heard that a raven lived two hundred years, having bought a young raven he kept it to try.

253

A pedant was voyaging in a storm and each of his fellow-passengers laying hold of some object to save himself, he grasped one of the anchors.

255

A pedant having buried his son and meeting his teacher, said, "Has the boy come?" The latter replied, "No." "Therefore, teach those who are left, he has died."

256

A pedant who was a teacher of wrestling heard that a scholar was ill, and next that he had a fever. Later having heard from the father that he had died, he said, "Proffering excuses in this way, you do not suffer the children to learn."

## JESTS OF HIEROCLES

257

A pedant bought a piece of meat and taking it up he carried it home. A kite breaking in snatched it out of his hand. He said, "May I become as you if I do not do as much as someone else."

258

A starveling lieutenant ordered his seat to be placed beside a bake-shop.

259

A witty fellow being away from home and having become ruptured, was asked upon his return what he had brought. He replied, "For you nothing, but for my thighs a little cushion."

260

A witty fellow seeing a physician anointing a young woman of mature years, said, "In healing her eyesight do not destroy the depth."

261

A certain person was reviling a witty fellow that, "I had your wife as a free

100

AND PHILAGRIUS

gift." He replied, "I have to endure this evil; what is the need of your having it."

262

A witty fellow was giving judgment for a leader when the latter nodded in a doze, he shouted, "I call out." He asked, "For what purpose?" The former replied, "To wake you up."

263

A pedant having a jar of choice wine sealed it up, but his servant bored a hole underneath and drew off the wine. He was astonished because the wine diminished whilst the seals remained whole. A friend said, "Look whether it was not drawn off from below." "You stupid fellow," he replied, "it is not the bottom which is gone but the upper part."

264

A pedant meeting a physician by the house hid himself. Being asked the reason by some one, he said, "I have the good fortune in not being ill, and I am ashamed to come into the sight of the physician."

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee.

2. The second part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee.

## Appendix

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

## Appendix

The following article from *The Gentleman's Magazine* for September, 1741, has been attributed to Dr. Samuel Johnson who was a contributor at that time. The reader will observe that the pompous style has taken the point out of the jokes.

### THE JESTS OF HIEROCLES

MR. URBAN, As Variety is one of the chief Excellencies of your Collection, you will perhaps not deny a Place to a few Stories, in favour of which, if you should be censured for inserting any Thing of so little Importance, you may allege, that they have been thought worthy to be preserv'd for many Ages; that they were ascribed to no meaner an Author than Hierocles; that they may contribute to inform your Readers of the Taste, the Amusements, or at least, what is often the Object of Curiosity, the Follies of former Times, and may be properly inculcated to those whose continual Application to Studies of



## JESTS OF HIEROCLES

more Labour than Use, has hindered them from being acquainted with more necessary Parts of Knowledge, and expose themselves to Contempt and Ridicule, by their Ignorance of common Life.

It will appear from the following Tales that *Pedants* have been ridicul'd in every Age, and that the Method of introducing a Story of any ridiculous Mistake, was to impute it to a stupid Philosopher.

I know not whether it is necessary to remark that I have in translating these ludicrous Narratives made use of the same Liberty that *Addison* commends in a Version of *Theophrastus*, for surely this piece is below Criticism, and no Preparation needs to be made for the Defence of that which will never be attacked.

### *The Pedants*

A Pedant having been almost drowned in an Attempt to swim, made an Oath that he would never enter the Water again till he was a complete Master of the Art.

Another hearing that one of his Friends was sick, paid him a visit, but found him so weak, that when he asked him, *how he did*, he could make no Answer; the Philosopher repeated the Question, and was at last so much provoked at the sick Man's Silence, that before he left the Room he cried out in the Heat of his Resentment,

## AND PHILAGRIUS

*I hope I shall be sick in a little Time, and have an Opportunity of treating you in the same manner.*

Another being much molested by a Mouse in his Apartment, used to sit at his Hole with Meat in his Mouth, in hopes by that method to lure him out.

Another formed a Design of teaching his Horse to live cheap, and for that Purpose kept him in the Stable without Meat, but one Morning found him dead, and going to his Friends, told them that he had lost his Horse; they observing in him an Air of uncommon Dejection, told him that he might repair the Damage by procuring another; ah! says he, but the Loss is greater than you imagine, for this Horse had just learned to live without eating.

A Philosopher having an Inclination to sell his House, was desired by the Person that proposed to buy it, to shew it him. Sir, says he, *You may spare yourself the Trouble of walking so far, for I always carry this Stone in my Pocket as a Specimen.*

Another stood before a Looking Glass with his Eyes shut, to see how handsome he was when he was asleep.

Another dreamed that he struck his foot against a Nail, and therefore laid on a Plaister, and complaining to a Brother Philosopher of his

## JESTS OF HIEROCLES

Hurt, was advised to take Warning, and to go to bed for the future with his Shoes on.

Another having purchased a new House planted himself at the Window, and seeing a Neighbour in the Street, Do not I look very handsome, says he, in my new House?

Another having a Cask of Wine sealed it up at the Top, but his Servant boring a Hole at the Bottom, stole the greatest Part of it away; sometime after having called a Friend to taste his Wine, he found the Vessel almost empty, and expressing his Admiration that the Liquor should be lost and the Seal Whole, was advised to examine whether the Bottom was not bored, You fool, says he, the Wine at the Bottom is safe enough; you see that it is the upper Part of the Cask that has been robbed.

Another, observing how Apples were shaken by the Wind from the Tree, goes to another Tree where Sparrows were perched, and laying a Sheet under it, begins to shake with all his Strength, in hopes of catching them.

Another walking in his Grounds, till he was very thirsty enquired for Water, and being told that he had good Water in his own Well which his Ancestors used to drink, he went therefore to it, and looking down, *The Water*, says he, *may be good, but my Ancestors must have had*

## AND PHILAGRIUS

*very long Necks, if they were able to get at it.*

Another meeting after a long Absence with an Acquaintance, told him, that he was surprised to see him, for he had heard he was dead, *but*, says the other, *you find the Report false. 'Tis hard to determine*, he replied, *for the Man that told me was one whose Word I woud [sic] sooner take than yours.*

Another having heard that a crow would live two hundred years, procured a young one to try.

Another being in a violent Tempest, observed the rest of the Passengers providing Pieces of Wood to swim upon, and going to look for something for himself, took hold of the Anchor, for he was determin'd, he told them, not to go to the Bottom without one Struggle for his life.

Another meeting with a Man that had just buried a twin Brother, enquired of him, whether it was he or his Brother that was lately buried.

Another, being to go with his whole Family to Sea, was very busy in making his Will, and observing his Servants in some Anxiety about their Danger, cried out to them, *do not be concerned Boys, for I have given you all your Freedom if we should happen to be drowned.*

Another being to cross a River in a Boat, came into it on Horseback, for, says he, I am in too great haste to think of going in a Boat on Foot.

## JESTS OF HIEROCLES

Another had a little Boy dead, and seeing a great Number of his Friends come together to the Funeral, told them, that he must make an Apology for bringing out such a little Child to so large a Company.

The Son of Another Pedant going to the War, told his Father, that he would engage to bring him the Head of one of the Enemies. *Child*, said he, *I shall be glad to see thee come home safe and well, though thou shouldst bring back neither the Enemies Head nor thy own.*

Another having received a Letter from his Friend, with a Request that he would buy him some Books, neglected the Affair, and, by way of Excuse, said when he met his Friend, I am sorry, that I never received the Letter which you wrote to me about the Books.

Another being on a Journey in Company with a *Barber* and a bald Man, it was agreed that each should watch in his Turn while the other two slept: The Barber, whose Turn happen'd to be first, shaved the Philosopher while he was asleep, and at the Expiration of his Time waked him, the Sage fell to scratching his Head, and finding no Hair, abused the Barber for not calling the Philosopher in his Turn, for do you not know, says he, that I, who am the bald Man, was to have been called up last.



•

Prepared for publication and privately  
printed for The Rowfant Club, on Old  
Stratford paper, by  
The Arthur H Clark Company  
Cleveland, MCMXX

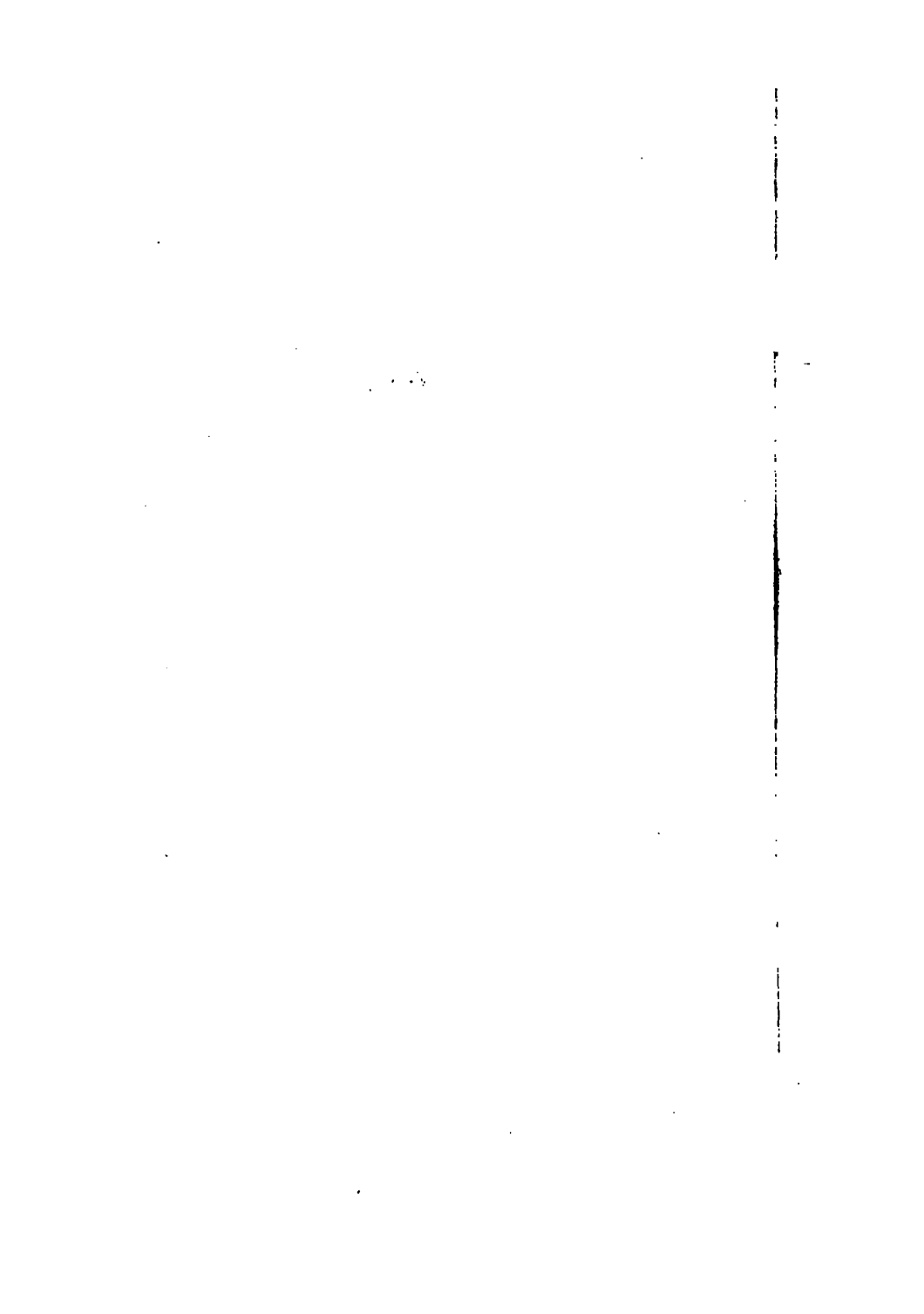
















3 2044 012 751 368

THE BORROWER WILL BE CHARGED  
AN OVERDUE FEE IF THIS BOOK IS  
NOT RETURNED TO THE LIBRARY ON  
OR BEFORE THE LAST DATE STAMPED  
BELOW. NON-RECEIPT OF OVERDUE  
NOTICES DOES NOT EXEMPT THE  
BORROWER FROM OVERDUE FEES.

CALL-STUDY  
CHANGE

